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**HRPDC and Regional Representatives from  
16 Cities and Counties Launch**



(Hampton Roads, Va., July 21, 2011) -- Following a year of fact-finding, research, focus group studies and creative development, the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC), members of its HR Green executive committee and city and county representatives from throughout the region launched [www.askHRgreen.org](http://www.askHRgreen.org) this week at a special kick-off meeting at the group's Chesapeake headquarters. Site developers believe the new website, chocked full of fast searchable features, an interactive calendar, social media feeds and a wealth of information, is the go-to resource for all things green in Hampton Roads.

"Our name pretty much says it all," said Julia B. Hillegass, public information and community affairs administrator for the [HRPDC](http://hrpdc.org). "If you have questions about recycling, smart water use, sustainable landscaping practices or anything related to our Hampton Roads environment, you'll find the answers at askHRgreen.org."

Encouraging environmental stewardship among the 16 cities and counties in Southeastern Virginia is a key charge of the HRDPC. The idea for askHRgreen.org began a year ago when the commission decided to consolidate its HR CLEAN, HR FOG, HR STORM and HR WET outreach programs into one regional umbrella campaign called HR Green. Following a series of focus group and online studies conducted last fall among South Hampton Roads and Peninsula residents, the newly-

formed HR Green executive committee focused its efforts on developing a content-rich website that would serve as the core of the regional awareness campaign.

“We discovered in our focus group studies that residents want to be good environmental stewards, but don’t know where to gather the information they need,” said Hillegass. “The site’s biggest virtue is that it allows visitors to search quickly for topics they desire, while learning about related information that may also be of interest.”

Other features include pages with easy-to-use “green” practices to implement in your home, yard, business, community and classroom; an interactive calendar with landing pages and Google locator map for regional events; and social media feeds including facebook, twitter and the HR Green blog written by a team of local experts who work in the region’s municipal utility and environmental divisions.

Soon, askHRgreen.org will post the results of a pilot service-learning program conducted earlier this year with an advanced composition class at Old Dominion University. Comprised predominantly of students preparing to be elementary school teachers, the class took on a variety of research and writing projects related to environmental education, including the development of “green” lesson plans that meet Virginia’s Standards of Learning requirements. The lesson plans will be available on the website later this summer.

Now that the website is launched, the HR Green executive committee will turn its attention to getting the word out about the site.

“There is information at askHRgreen.org that everyone can use—individuals, families, business owners and educators,” said Hillegass. “We hope the site will be helpful and hope that residents choose to make it their favorite. But perhaps, more important, we hope it will inspire them to start their own little green movement in their own backyards.”

### **About the HRPDC and HR Green**

The [HRPDC](#) provides assistance on local and regional issues pertaining to economics, physical and environmental planning, emergency management and transportation. The Commission represents more than 1.6 million people who live in the cities of Chesapeake, Franklin, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Poquoson,

Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach and Williamsburg, and the counties of Gloucester, Isle of Wight, James City, Southampton, Surry and York. With a focus on simple steps residents can take to find their “inner green,” [HR Green](#) is a region-wide public awareness campaign launched this summer by the HRPDC and the 16 cities and counties it serves.

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